

THE CASTAWAYS OF THE  
FLAG

the boatswain remarked philosophically,  
" we won't  
ask anything more of it."

Fritz and his companions now had a cave in which to establish their quarters, and a stream which would enable them to refill the boat's casks with fresh water. The chief remaining question was whether they could provide themselves with food.

Things did not look too promising. After crossing the little river the explorers had a fresh and deep disappointment.

Beyond the promontory a creek was cut into the coast, in width about half a mile, fringed with a rim of sand, and enclosed behind by the cliff. At the far end rose a perpendicular bluff, whose foot was washed by the sea.

This shore presented the same arid appearance as the other. Here, too, the vegetable growths were confined to patches of lichen and layers of sea-weeds thrown up by the tide\* Was it, then, on a mere islet, a rocky, lonely, uninhabitable island in the Pacific Ocean, that the boat had come ashore ? There seemed every reason to fear so.

It appeared useless to carry the

exploration  
as far as the bluff which enclosed the  
creek. They  
were about to go back to the boat  
when James  
stretched out his hand towards the  
shore and said :  
" What Is that I see down there on the  
sand ?